

THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIUMPH OVER
DEATH AND THE GRAVE.

A
SERMON

OCCASIONED BY THE DECEASE OF
Mrs. MARY BEATSON,

LATE WIFE OF
Mr. JOHN BEATSON.

PREACHED IN HULL,

JULY 10. 1774.

BY JAMES HARTLEY.

To which is added
A SKETCH OF HER CHARACTER.

HULL: Printed by J. FERRARY,
And sold by J. Rivington, in St. Paul's Church-
Yard; Messrs. Richardson and Urquhart under
the Royal Exchange; and G. Keith, in Grace-
Church Street, London.

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH OVER
DEATH AND THE GRAVE.

SERMON

Occasioned by the Death of

Mrs. Mary Beaton.

Late Wife of

Mr. John Beaton.



Preached in Hull.

July 11, 1774.

By James Hargrave.

To which is added

A Sketch of her Character.

Hull: Printed by J. Parry.
And sold by J. Richardson, in St. Paul's Church-
Yard; J. Richardson and Son, in the Strand;
the Royal Exchange; and G. Long, in Great-
Britain Street, London.

CHRISTIAN'S TRIUMPH, &c.

I CORINTHIANS, xv. 55, 56, 57.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

IT is, perhaps, unnecessary to observe to you, my dear audience, that the important passage I have just read from the inspired writings, hath by the request of our late dear Sister, been recommended to my serious consideration in order to improve it among you, in consequence of her Death; and it may with great propriety be entitled, *The Christian's triumph over DEATH and the GRAVE.* Happy they, who when engaged in the last struggle with the grim adversary; and whilst stepping down into the gloomy regions, can thus piously insult both, and pleasingly sing of victory over them! This, I understand, was the felicity of our late dear Sister, not only at the moment of her exit, but throughout her tedious and trying sickness, which at length issued in her dissolution. She for some time saw the determined and stubborn enemy advancing, and viewed his poisoned dart presented; clearly perceived that she must fall a victim into his killing hand; and that her dying body must, as a helpless captive, be seized and carried to the dismal

cell. But, being no stranger to that blessed gospel, in which life and immortality are brought to light; and looking forward to that day of complete redemption, when every bond of death shall be dissolved, and death himself destroyed, she could in the solemn, but triumphant language of the apostle exclaim, O ! DEATH where is thy STING ? &c.

And indeed without a real knowledge of the everlasting gospel, and a lively faith and hope in that eternal redemption therein revealed, how should the mind of a dying sinner be rationally composed, not to say joyful and triumphant, with the awful scenes of death and the grave, judgment and the never-ending-world immediately in view ? How insignificant for that purpose is all that the present world can afford ! How vain are increasing heaps of earthly treasure, and sounding titles of momentary honour, to a mind fixed on things which are eternal, and especially at that important period ! Where are now the triumphing of the wicked ? The joy of the hypocrite ? The pleasures of sin ? and the laughter of fools ? Let *these* attend ; and if they can, support and comfort the unhappy mortal who hath lived under the baneful influence of them, when death maketh his approach unto him, and the grave is ready for his reception. What are these, but as miserable comforters, in that too often unexpected hour ? No less cruel than treacherous, they give up those who have depended upon them and been devoted to them, to all the terror and bitterness of death ; they even sharpen his envenomed sting, and render

OVER DEATH AND THE GRAVE.

render it far more keen and tormenting. Only the man who is a christian indeed, and whose hope entreth into that within the vail, can meet death with a rational and manly courage. He, only, can approach the dreaded champion in the name of the God of Israel, and, confident of final victory over him, join our apostle in the words under consideration, *O Death where is thy Sting? &c.*

The chapter from which my text is taken, is perhaps, one of the most excellent, comprehensive, and sublime, in all the book of God. It contains a summary of the whole gospel; that gospel which the apostle had preached to the Corinthians, and whereby men are and shall be saved, in their belief of it and perseverance in it. It sets forth the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the sins of guilty men, as that grand event particularly pointed to, in the prophecies, promises, and ceremonies, contained in the scriptures of the Old Testament. It presents us with indisputable evidences of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, an article so absolutely fundamental to our holy religion, that without it all our preaching, faith and hope, as christians, would be entirely vain. It leads our thoughts, our dependence and expectation, to our exalted Prince and Saviour, as having universal dominion, and as reigning and conquering, until all his and his people's enemies, are subdued and actually destroy'd. Besides, it contains invincible arguments to prove, that all true saints shall be raised up at the last day, to life eternal, when corruption, weakness and mor-

ality shall be no more, for death shall be swallowed up in victory. Upon this, therefore, the apostle builds his triumph contained in the words just read over; O DEATH, *where is thy STING?* O GRAVE *where is thy VICTORY?* &c.

DEATH naturally hath a STING; for the *sting of death is sin*. . . But these two are not inseparable. Death is here considered as disarmed and deprived of his sting. The allusion seems to be to those creatures, which sometimes shoot and strike their stings, where they leave them and entirely lose them; after which, tho' they themselves exist, and may still be somewhat troublesome, yet their stings being gone, they are incapable of killing, wounding, or hurting, and therefore are no more terrible, nor is there any real danger to be apprehended from them.

Thus it is with death, in reference to the children of God. They must die, and death may in many respects be disagreeable to them; yet his sting being taken away, this enemy hath lost his formidable appearance, and is stripped of all his horrors.

The grave also hath her victory. She conquers and triumphs over millions. But it is one thing to get the victory, and another to maintain it. Here the grave will fail. The conqueror shall at last be overcome, and the conquered set for ever free. This is immutably decreed, absolutely promised, and will most certainly be accomplished. O GRAVE! *I will*

be

be thy destruction *. To the accomplishment of this gracious declaration the Apostle hath an eye, and in this promise he stedfastly fixes his faith and hope. He views the grave, not as she is at present, crowded with increasing victims, and tyrannising over numberless captives; but, as having been forced to surrender up all her prisoners, and as being herself totally destroyed. He considers himself as happily delivered from, and made a conqueror over this enemy, once much dreaded, and into whose cruel hands he once fell. This conquest he *gratefully* ascribes unto GOD, and particularly notes the only medium through which it is obtained, namely, *our Lord Jesus Christ*.

What I intend in farther discoursing upon the words before us, is

I. To consider death in the character of an enemy to mankind, and point out some of the properties of this enemy.

II. To take some notice of the *sting* of death, and the *victory* of the grave, the things relative to which they are here challenged and insulted.

III. Briefly to shew you wherein the christian's victory over death and the grave doth really consist.

IV. To consider *from* whom, and *through* whom, this victory is obtained.

V. To close with some use of the whole.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIUMPH

I. I shall consider death in the character of an enemy to mankind, and note some of the properties of this enemy.

That death is an enemy, is what the sacred text expressly declares *. *The last ENEMY that shall be destroyed is DEATH.* And to illustrate and confirm this more fully we may observe,

1. That death, in some sense at least, is in connexion with, and under the power of the devil †. Now the devil is our common and constant adversary; and therefore we may be sure, that whatever has connexion with him, and is in any respect under his government, is our adversary also. 'Tis true, Satan hath no absolute and unlimited power over death. Nor doth, nor *can* he order, determine or fix any thing as to the time or circumstances of it; but, so far as permitted, he not only tempts men to those things the wages whereof is death, but as it were takes the pale horse and his rider under his direction, and cruelly inflicts death upon men. Thus he armed and marshalled the King of terrors against the house of holy Job, and with unrelenting malice, slew his servants, sons, and daughters †.

2. That Death is an enemy to mankind, may be concluded from the general *dread* men justly have of him, and the awful *terrors* with which he fills the minds of some. We read of those who *through fear*

* 1 Cor xv. 26. † Heb. ii. 14. † Job i. 22, &c.

of death were all their life-time subject to bondage ||. And for what reason do the scriptures speak of the terrors of the shadow of death *, but on account of those gloomy horrors, which overwhelm the hearts of some, from the apprehensions they have of this dreaded foe? BILDAD, describing the dreadful end of the ungodly, observes, *Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet. His strength shall be hunger-bitten, and destruction shall be ready at his side. It shall devour the strength of his skin: Even the first-born of death shall devour his strength. His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the KING of TERRORS †.* Death may be called the King of terrors, because he is possessed of a *supreme* terror; a terror far superiour to any other, to which the sons of men are liable. And indeed, when death is considered in its whole extent, as the wages of sin and a penal evil; and when it is viewed in the nature, circumstances, and consequences of it, what can be so dreadful to a guilty, impenitent, and unpardoned sinner? Men may have trouble, perturbation of mind, and a degree of terror, occasioned by various objects; as at the apprehension of the loss of riches, or honours, and of being exposed to poverty, shame, and disgrace; at the burning of an house, the loss of a ship at sea, the infliction of some transient punishment, or the undergoing some painful operation. But none of these is the King of terrors, or the greatest of terrors, to which all others give place, and in which they are

|| Heb ii. 15. * Job xxiv. 17. † Job xviii. 11-15.

all

all swallowed up and lost. For supposing all these were present, let but the terrors of death seize a man, and they are all forgotten. 'Tis then little to him whether he be rich, or poor, honourable, or despised. Death leaves no room for such concern. Even the godly *themselves*, have often been deeply affected with the dread of this enemy. It was the bitter complaint of holy David, *the terrors of death are fallen upon me* *. And though careless sinners may, for the present, be so fool-hardy as to mock at death, dare him and despise him, yet will they shortly find there is no jesting with this adversary. Yea, those who are well persuaded they have no reason to be afraid, cannot but be filled with serious awe when he approacheth.

§ 3. *Death* will appear as an enemy, if we consider the *pain* and *sorrow* mankind are daily suffering from him in the present state. What anguish from personal or relative afflictions doth he make men feel every moment! He often wounds deep, and holds the languishing *mortal* in lingering tortures, before he kills out-right. Fierce diseases and acute pains are perpetually falling upon us, from this unwearied tormentor of the human race. What vast numbers are every moment groaning under malignant fevers, burning agues, violent cholics, &c! They are *chastened with pain upon their beds, and the multitude of their bones with strong pain*; every comfort of life is imbittered to them; their very flesh is *consumed away that it cannot be seen, and their bones*

* Psal. lv. 4.

which

which were not seen stick out †. Others again are lamenting the calamities death has brought upon them, by the assaults he has made upon their *friends and relations*. What dejected looks! what wounded spirits! what sighs, groans, and floods of tears are occasioned, by the dreadful inroads this adversary is continually making, upon families, communities, neighbourhoods, and nations! Our world, by reason of death, is constantly a kind of RAMA, where there is a voice heard, *lamentation, weeping and great mourning.* †

4. Death will be acknowledged an enemy if we consider, that he often spoils us of what is peculiarly *dear and valuable* to us. He cannot indeed deprive us of the treasure we have laid up in heaven. He cannot reach our incorruptible and undefiled inheritance, reserved for us in that better world, where death shall never come. He cannot dissolve our union with the Lord Jesus Christ, nor prevent that God should be the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever. *These* are none of them in the power of our adversary: But of things within his power, he seizeth and carrieth off, what to us is most interesting and important. He doth not indeed call for house and land, our silver and gold; this would be a small matter, and would often be cheerfully complied with, in comparison of what he demands of us and violently taketh away from us: For what are all these compared with the lovely

† *Job xxxiii. 19 - 21.* † *Matt. ii. 18.*

child, the tender parent, the affectionate wife, or the indulgent husband? But even *these* are not spared by this enemy. He cutteth asunder, with an unrelenting hand, the closest and sweetest bonds of nature, notwithstanding the heart-felt grief we thereby suffer, or the painful loss we thereby sustain.

5. Death will appear our enemy, if we consider, that though he may not tear away our earthly enjoyments from us, he will quickly tear *us* away from *them*. When once this enemy overtakes us, he absolutely forbids our farther claim upon, and irresistibly hurries us away from every mortal comfort. The sovereign decree and indispensable mandate of the mighty monarch, touching the dying mortal, is, "*He shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him* *." The King must remove from his palace, and come down from his throne; he must resign his sceptre and his kingdom, as well as the beggar turn out of his cottage, quit the dunghill, and strip his rags. The godly, indeed, know this. They have laid the serious truth to heart: "*We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out* †." They have therefore, fixed upon a better, and an enduring substance †. They have respect to the recompence of the reward, and are looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ ‖. But, alas! for those who have their

* Psalm xlix. xvii. † 1. Tim. vi. 7. † Heb. x. 34.

‖ Heb. xi. 26. Tit. ii. 13.

treasure on earth, and their portion in this life. Their ground may bring forth plentifully, and every flowing tide may increase their wealth; they may pull down their barns and build greater, and lay up much in store; yet death will shortly insult them in reference to all they possess. *Whose shall those things be which you have provided?* But, I proceed to point out some of the properties of this enemy. And

1. Death is a *certain* enemy. There is no doubt to be made of his design against us. We cannot cast our eye upon the sacred volume, or look around us in the world; we cannot turn a thought upon the fate of past generations, or even attend to our own feelings; but we are convinced that we *must needs die, and be as water spilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up again* *. The living know that they shall die †. 'Tis not a point of meer possibility, or probability with them, but they positively and certainly know that they must be dissolved. *I know that thou wilt bring me to death, &c* §.

2. Death is an *universal* enemy. He hath openly proclaimed war against all mankind, and will never go back from it, or make peace with any. He hath avowed destruction upon all, from the man of grey hairs, to the suckling upon the breast, yea to the child unborn. He spares neither high nor low, great nor small, young nor old, nor will he know any difference, or in this respect, make any

* 2 Sam. xiv. 14. † Eccl. ix. 5. § Job xxx. 23.

distinction, between the most abandoned sinner, and the most humble, holy, and exemplary saint. There are who tell us, though not in words, yet by their works, that they have *made a covenant with death*, and that, *with hell they are at agreement* *. They live as thoughtless of this certain and important event; as regardless of a preparation for it and as fearless of its awful consequences, as if they were sure never to die: But their *covenant with death shall be disannulled, and their agreement with hell shall not stand* †. Even they also shall be trodden down by this enemy. For *what man is he that liveth and shall not see death* ‡?

3. Death is an enemy always *close upon us*. Our time for life being only as a span, a hand-breadth, &c. Death can never be at any great distance from any person. For *man that is born of a woman, is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: He fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not* §.

Did we look for this enemy through the glass of the sacred word, we should certainly perceive him near at hand. But, alas! How often do our vain imaginations, and fond desires of life, interpret circumstances, such as youth, health, strength, &c. which yet speak nothing certain in the case, into what nearly amounts to a positive contradiction to

* *Isa. xxviii. 15.* † *ver. 18.* ‡ *Psal. lxxxix. 48.*

§ *Job xiv. 1. 2.*

God's exprefs declaration ! Such an unwarrantable and unworthy presumption the apoftle met with in thofe, who were faying *to-day, or to-morrow, we will go into fuch a city, and continue there a year, and buy and fell and get gain.* Wherefore, to cure their inordinate affections, to rectify their judgment, and to alarm them and put them upon their guard againft the approach of this enemy, he adds, *whereas ye know not what fhall be on the morrow : For, what is your life ? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanifheth away**. We are told, *the time is fhort †*; and fhould not we therefore each pray with the *Pfalmift ? Lord make me to know mine end and the meafure of my days what it is : That I may know how frail I am ‡*.

4. Death is a very powerful enemy. Solomon tells us, that *love is ftrong as death* ¶. Which ftrongly imply death's great ftrength. Mortal man may be dignified with the honorary title of **MOST HIGH AND MIGHTY PRINCE** ; but what is he before this king of terrors ? We have heard of the mighty Cæfar, and the great Alexander ; of the fpreading terrors, and the amazing fuccels of their arms. They, we know, conquered nations, and fubdued kingdoms ; yet with what eafe did death make them his prey, and tread them down, as it were, in the mire of the ftreet ! He at pleafure came up into their windows, and entered into their palaces ¶. He

* James iv. 13. 14. † 1 Cor. vii. 29. ‡ Psalm xxxix. 4. ¶ Song. viii. 6. ¶ Jer. ix. 21.

quickly dashed them to pieces, and notwithstanding their formidable characters, easily cast them into the pit of corruption. We read of one, who made the earth to tremble; he shook kingdoms, made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof;—we hear the haughty monarch profanely boast, “*I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God :*” But how soon did death, that resistless champion, bring him down to the grave, cast him out like an abominable branch, and sink him to the stones of the pit *. What is *our* strength then, that *we* should hope to withstand. Were our strength the strength of stones, and our flesh as firm as brass, our hope would still be in vain. There is *no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit ; neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war* §.

5. Death is a very *politic, subtle and deceitful* enemy. Though he is never at any great distance from us, yet we cannot say, where he is, or at what time, or in what manner he will come upon us. We can determine nothing certainly from our age, our health, or our strength, how long we shall escape his destructive hand. We can by no means discover whether the new-born infant, or the hoary-head, the little playing child, the sprightly youth, or the strong and stately man, shall fall a sacrifice to so subtle a foe. We can guess nothing from the last victim death snatched from our world, for whom his next arrow is ordained.

* *Isa. xiv. 12 - 20. § Eccl. viii. 8.*

Sometimes

Sometimes he conceals himself, under a kind of flattering disease, and imposes upon us from our own feelings. We hope for the recovery of our health, and cherish the prospect of a much longer life; while he is determinately sapping our vitals, and speedily sinking us to the silent grave. At other times he comes suddenly upon us, and cuts down at once and in an instant, without any preceding alarm, or the least notice of his approach. How often doth he surprise the thoughtless and unwary, in the midst of all the pride and gaiety of life, and in full pursuit of worldly pleasures, or deep immersed in earthly cares! Let those who may least suspect this enemy, be roused at the consideration. How needful is it that we be always upon our watch-tower, and constantly on our guard, lest death should come upon us when we are unprepared to meet him. —

Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.*

6. Death is ^{an} *incompassionate and cruel enemy*. His heart, like that of Leviathan, is as firm as a stone, yea, as hard as brass. He is void of pity in the most pitiable cases, and an utter stranger to sympathy, whatever others may endure. How often have the miseries and dangers of the desolate widow and the helpless orphan; the irreparable loss of societies, and the sinking interests of whole nations, in vain been urged to move the obdurate tyrant to

* Luke xxi. 34.

forbear

forbear his stroke, and withdraw his hand ! In vain have millions poured out their piercing cries, and presented their unutterable groans, that death might desist and spare. — Before him the eye weeps, and the heart bleeds, in vain.

7. Death is an *insatiable* enemy. Though he hath devoured millions, yet his voracious appetite is not cloyed, nor his unequalled fierceness in the least abated. He hath, for near six thousand years, been stalking about, and indiscriminately devouring the human race ; cutting down without distinction, and killing without reserve ; yet we find him daily at the same employ. His enormous scythe is never laid down, nor his devouring sword put up into its scabbard. Though multitudes are every moment languishing under the poison of his fatal darts, his bow is still bent, and his arrow still made ready upon the string. Where are our ancestors, who, a hundred years ago, were occupying the dwellings, and possessing the estates we now enjoy ? Their bones are either mouldered or mouldering to dust. Death like a flood, hath carried them away : He is diligently preparing for *our* destruction also, and will not be satisfied, no not with all *succeeding* generations. To allude to the words of the prophet, we may say of death, *he gathers unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people ; he ENLARGETH HIS DESIRE as hell, and cannot be satisfied* *. — However, it is with pleasure I would observe,

* Heb. ii. 5.

8. That Death is a *vanquished enemy*. — Victory is obtained over him, even now, in the design of God, and the Cross of Christ. *Jesus hath abolished Death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel* *. And the exceeding great and precious promises, which are given to all the saints, and confirmed by the oath of God, and the blood of Christ, infallibly ensure the victory to them. This last enemy shall be actually destroyed. — Lift up your heads then, O ye righteous, for the time of your redemption draweth nigh. Your God will shortly put a final period to your thralldom and dishonour, and will *wipe away all tears from your eyes*. You have a solid foundation laid for a shout of triumph against your adversary, and may, in full view of him, even at present sing, *there shall be no more DEATH, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for former things are passed away* †.

II. I am to take notice of the *sting* of death, and the *victory* of the grave, the things in reference to which they are challenged and insulted. — O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? — Death hath his STRING. And the text informs us that the sting of death is SIN. Upon which I would observe,

I. That sin is the *procuring cause* of death. — Death was never intended, nor was it ever threat-

* 2 Tim. i. 10. † Rev. xxi. 4.

-ened, but upon the consideration of sin. — For, in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Nor was it denounced as a sentence of judgment and condemnation against man, till he had wilfully and rebelliously violated the law of his Maker. — *Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou shouldst not eat? Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.*

The apostle speaks of the reign of death †. But the reign of death, arose from, is founded in, and supported by, sin §. If sin had not reigned unto death, death had not reigned at all. And what the apostle intends, in that chapter, is to argue from the universal dominion which death hath over the whole posterity of Adam, to the certain imputation of his sin to all his seed †.

2. It is sin charged upon the conscience, which arms death with terror, and that with which he tortures the guilty and dying criminal. — As the scorpion, or some other pernicious reptile, or baneful insect, by striking with its sting, emits its poison, and thereby wounds and kills, with the most painful sensations and grievous torments; so is the power of guilt, in an awakened conscience at the hour of death.

'Tis true, we know nothing experimentally, and I pray God, we never may, how death, if I may so speak, handles a poor impenitent sinner; one whose conscience is not purged by the blood of Christ,

* Gen. ii. 17. || Chap. iii. 11 - 19. † Rom. v. 14.
§ ver. 21. † ver. 12, &c.

whose mind is not reconciled to God, and whose heart is not renewed and sanctified by grace. But we have reason to believe, that his greatest distress, or the keenest part of his anguish lies in those deep and painful wounds, which death, by sin, giveth to his conscience at that awful period. The just demerit of every transgression is inconceivable misery, as endless in its duration as that ETERNAL LIFE which is *the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord* *. And how must a sense of obnoxiousness to a condition so dreadful, torture the man whom death driveth away in his wickedness †! Whose bones are full of the sins of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust ‡, unrepented of, and unpardoned! — How deplorable the case of one, in whom hope, as well as life, is just expiring!

And as the sting of death is sin, so the strength of sin is the LAW. — By the law, we are, no doubt, to understand that which is commonly called the *moral law*; and which was inscribed on the heart of man as he came out of the hand of his Maker. This law is spiritual, holy, just, and good §. The righteous rule of God's moral government among men; and the unchanging rule of righteousness and obedience to men. It always did, it still doth, and it never can do otherwise, than insist upon love to God and love to men, and that we be, in this love and the proper fruits of it, perfect, con-

* *Rom. vi. 23.* † *Prov. xvi. 32.* ‡ *Job xx. 11.*
§ *Rom. vii. 12 - 14.*

stant, and perpetual *. However, this law is the strength of sin; 'Tis not the cause of sin; nor in any respect chargeable with it, or blameable for it. But, sin being committed, the law giveth power and efficacy to it against men, in death, with all its attending horrors and destructive consequences.

The law forbids sin, convicts men of it, and condemns them for it. Nothing is sin, nor can be the cause, nor sting of death, which is not a transgression of this law ||. If men were under no law from God, they could neither be chargeable with any crime, nor obnoxious to any punishment. Sin is not imputed when there is no law †. Consequently where there is no law there is no transgression †. But men can no more be without law to God, than they can be free from all obligation to obey their Maker. Hence it follows, that the hearts and lives, the thoughts, words, and works of men, will for ever be under the cognizance of the Divine Law. And all having sinned and come short of the glory of God, they are by this law convinced and condemned as transgressors. — *What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God. For, by the law is the knowledge of sin §. And as the wages of sin is death, including all the distressing circumstances which may attend it, or be eternally consequent upon it, this is what the law righteously*

* Mat. xxii. 38, 39. || 1 John iii. 4. † Rom. y. 13. † chap. iv. 15. § Rom. iii. 19, 20.

connects with, and threatens for every sin. It is according to this tremendous, but just, and reasonable law, which hardened sinners now treat with much contempt, that death will be inflicted upon them; that they must be brought forth to the day of wrath, and even suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. — Thus the law is the strength of sin: Thus sin worketh death by that which is good *. And thus the commandment which was ordained to LIFE, is found to be unto DEATH ‖. The native tendency of the law is unto life: To direct men in the way of life; and to secure to the obedient the enjoyment of life. For it is a certain truth, that as to the things which the law requires, the man that doth them shall LIVE in them †. But its consequential tendency, or its tendency in consequence of sin, is unto death: For the soul that sinneth it shall die §. And cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them ¶.

Secondly. As death has his sting, so the grave hath her VICTORY. She seizeth, confineth, disgraceth, and even consumeth the sin-defiled Body. The Spirit indeed is not within her power. It escapes, and flies unto God who gave it **. The Believer may rejoice, even when his earthly tabernacle is falling, for he hath a building of God, and shall be clothed upon with his house from heaven; and while he is absent from the body, he shall be pre-

* Rom. vii. 5. ‖ ver. 10. † Gal. iii. 12. § Ezek. xviii. 4. ¶ Gal. iii. 10. ** Eccl. xii. 7.

sent with the Lord *. The happy soul, no more fettered with flesh, defiled with sin, or subject to grief and sorrow, shall be numbered with the *spirits of just men made PERFECT*. But Death, having made a conquest of the body, he commits it to the hand of the cruel and insatiable GRAVE †; who, though she hath led away in triumph, all the countless millions of past generations, to her abhorred dominions, her report is still the same, “*And yet there is room.*” The language of the horse-leech is her perpetual cry, “*GIVE, GIVE.*” She is never satisfied, nor once saith *it is enough* ‖.

Having seized the helpless captive, she binds it in her adamant chains, and bolts it fast within her iron gates. The grave hath her gates, and the earth her bars †; by which all are securely kept, who are once forced down to the pit of corruption. True, they are prisoners of hope, and the time of their deliverance draweth nigh; but at present they lie helpless and wretched, their confinement is close, and their bonds are strong.

Some victors have delighted to assert their dominion over those whom they may have vanquished, by laying them under reproach, and covering them with shame, as debasing and lasting as they could invent. And in this the imperious grave hath excelled. Never was disgrace equal to that which she

* 2 Cor. v. 1-9. † Psalm lxxxix. 48. ‖ Prov. xxx. 15, 16. † Isa. xxxviii. 10. Jonah ii. 6.

hath done to our *nature*. The body, once fearfully and wonderfully made, and even curiously wrought under the direction of infinite wisdom, is by her vilely cast away, covered with clods and dust, given as a prey to greedy and devouring worms, and entirely turned to stench and putrefaction. Where are now the active limbs? Where the elegant form, the comeliness and beauty, which lately composed and adorned the human frame? Where the eye, so crystal, the cheek so rosy, and the countenance so graceful and engaging? They are utterly defaced, and totally ruined, by the detestable, but resistless hand of the grave! Not now lovely, but loathsome! Not honourable, but despised! The body indeed is not annihilated. It still exists, in some form, and some place; but not *as the body*. As *such* it is quite consumed, or entirely destroyed by the cruelty of the grave*. She hath turned it to rottenness, reduced it to atoms, and mingled it with common dust. And now, who can reflect and not cry out, "O! grave how great is thy victory! How awful thy nature! How vast thy extent!" And this victory, one would think, must be perpetual. For, can those scattered bones, ever be again united? Can that dust live and breath again? *Shall the prey be taken from the mighty? Or the lawful captive delivered?* Yes, complete as the victory of the grave may appear to be, this ruin and disgrace shall not be for ever. "Yet **A LITTLE WHILE, and he that shall come will come and will not tarry**." Then, *even the captives of the mighty*

* *Job xxiv. 19. || Heb. x. 37.*

shall

shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered. Victory, complete and final victory is yet certain to the faithful followers of the lamb; it is in a sense already obtained for them and given to them; and they, by that faith *which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*, can perceive it, are persuaded of it, and embrace it; realize it and triumph in it, as if it were at present actually enjoyed. I now proceed,

III. Briefly to shew wherein the christian's victory over death and the grave, doth really consist.

Now, this victory doth not lie in being exempted from the stroke of death, the hand of the grave, or the confinement, disgrace, and consumption before noted. The apostle in his triumphant song, did not imagine that he should ride in a chariot to heaven, or that he should enter upon the inheritance of the saints in light, without going the way of all the earth, and suffering the same desolation in the grave which others undergo. No; he admits all these circumstances against him; allows every advantage gained, of which death and the grave may boast; and, notwithstanding all, he sets his feet upon the necks of these enemies, and thus triumphs over them.

“O DEATH! thou who didst so early erect thy throne, hast so long maintained thy uncontrouled dominion, and spread thy victories so far and wide; thou who hast filled the hearts of all generations with dread and horror, hast given all

the

" the nations as dust to thy sword, and as driven
 " stubble to thy bow ; who compellest all the *beloved*
 " and *redeemed* of the Lord, to feel the weight of
 " thy killing vengeance ; Where is now thy sting ?
 " *That alone* made thee terrible, and of *that* thou
 " art deprived for ever, and thou, even *thou thyself*
 " shalt shortly be no more."

" O GRAVE ! thou who hast swallowed up mil-
 " lions ; and reduced them to so helpless and hope-
 " less a condition, as to preclude every suspicion of
 " another struggle from them ; thou who hast laid
 " thy merciless and hated hands, upon those who
 " are the purchase of the Saviour's blood, and the
 " renewed workmanship of God ; hast hailed them
 " to thy horrid dungeon, and cast them to dust and
 " worms, to putrify and rot for ever, How art thou
 " deceived ! Thy dominion is destroyed, thy cap-
 " tives are set free, and all thy triumphs for ever
 " are at an end ! O GRAVE ! where is thy victory ?
 " Notwithstanding all the ruin and disgrace, we
 " have suffered in thy gloomy regions, we are made
 " more than conquerors, and *thanks be to God which*
 " *giveth us the victory, &c.*"

But, this victory consists chiefly in two things :—
 Deliverance from sin ; — and a glorious Resurrec-
 tion of the body at the last day.

First, A complete and everlasting deliverance from
 sin ; in the guilt of it, the condemnation of the law
 due to it, and the painful apprehensions arising from

it.

D

n. The

1. The real *Christian*, or true *Believer* in *Christ*, is made *free from sin* *. Which, as we have heard, is the sting of death. He is acquitted from its guilt, and delivered from its dominion. How numerous soever his transgressions may have been, and though attended with circumstances ever so aggravating, they are all freely and for ever pardoned. He being the subject of *repentance toward God*, and of *faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*, he is the *blessed man*, to whom the Lord will not impute sin †. This is according to the open declaration of the gospel, and that which maketh it *glad tidings of great joy* to guilty men ‡. Who, therefore, shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect §, as now called and justified ||?

2. SIN being put away the believer has NOTHING to fear from the Divine Law. Its curse indeed is awful; and those who are under it and liable to endure it, must be unspeakably wretched and miserable: But, *there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit ¶*. — The law, as threatening vengeance, hath nothing to say to the *man in Christ*. As a *rule of life*, according to which he is to order and regulate the whole of his conversation, it speaketh to him, and as *such* he will attentively and constantly hear it. Considered in this point of light, it hath the government in his conscience; yea, is put in his mind and written in his heart; and he *delights in it*

* Rom. vi. 22. † Rom. iv. 8. ‡ Acts xiii. 38, 39.
§ Rom. viii. 33. || ver. 30. ¶ Rom. viii. 1.

after the inward man : But then it can no more take him by the throat, like some merciless creditor, saying “*Pay me that thou owest.*” For, the believer, in that respect, is not UNDER *the law* *. He is DEAD *to it by the body of Christ*, and as absolutely free from it as the surviving wife is from the law of the deceased husband †.

vb3. Sin being remitted and the curse of the law removed, hence ariseth *freedom from painful apprehensions*, in reference to a future state. — The real believer has peace with God, and is absolutely safe for the eternal world ‡; and therefore is rationally composed when the last enemy approacheth. — Not stung with a sense of continued and unrepented of rebellion against his Maker; not distracted with the terrors of an angry Judge; but with a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience; with a hope full of life and immortality, built on pardoning mercy and atoning blood; he cheerfully prepares for the chambers of death. He considers his dissolution as his happy deliverance, the close of his warfare, and the end of his race: He regards it as his entrance upon his eternal rest, and as his accession to the promised, and never-fading crown of life and glory.

SECONDLY, This victory further includes in it, a glorious RESURRECTION OF THE BODY at the last day.

I. There shall be a resurrection of the body. —

* Rom. vi. 14. Rom. v. 8. † chap. vii. 1-7.
 ‡ John x. 28. D 2 The

The scattered dust of the saints shall at length be united, formed, and re-animated; loosed from the bonds of death, and released from its long confinement in the grave. *The dead shall bear the voice of the son of God, and shall come forth* *.

Some indeed, who have professed the name of Christ, have nevertheless denied this important article of the Christian faith. — But they did greatly err, not knowing the scriptures, in which alone the joyful truth is made known, nor the power of God, by which only it can be accomplished †. And were the doctrine of the resurrection overthrown, the triumph expressed in my text could not be supported. The apostle himself grants, that if there be no resurrection of the dead, *then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished* †; — that our faith is vain, and that we are yet in our sins §; — nay, that if in **THIS LIFE ONLY** we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable ||. But here is the victory and joy of the saints. — *The trumpet shall sound, and the DEAD SHALL BE RAISED ¶. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; that is, before those which are alive and remain, shall be caught up — to meet the Lord in the air.*

* John v. 28. 29. † 1. Cor. xv. 12. 2. Tim. ii. 17. 18. Mat. xxii. 18. † 1. Cor. xv. 18. § ver. 17. || ver. 19. ¶ ver. 52.

2. This resurrection of the body will be **GLORIOUS**.—To note this seems needful, because *that* part of the victory I am now upon, consists not in a resurrection *simply*: For the *wicked* must rise at the last day as well as the righteous; yet will they not share in the *happiness*, nor join in the *triumph*, of the righteous. *They shall come forth*, but only to the *resurrection of damnation*; which is the **SECOND DEATH** *.

'Tis the peculiar blessedness of those who *die in the Lord*, that their bodies, which are sown in *dishonour*, shall be raised in *glory* †. Tho' they now lie deep in disgrace, their beauty defaced and their form destroyed, they shall then be adorned with all the distinguishing excellencies, designed for them by redeeming grace and adopting love. Accordingly, this is what the children of God look to, hope in, and groan and wait for, as the **ADOPTION**; to wit, *the REDEMPTION of their BODY*.

The apostle, who, in the context before us, leads us both to the *matter* and the *time* of our triumph, is treating, not only of the resurrection of the body, but also of the singular advantages with which it shall arise, *viz.* as a spiritual, incorruptible, immortal, and glorious body §. *For this corruptible must put on INCORRUPTION, and this mortal must put on IMMORTALITY. So, when this corruptible, shall have put on INCORRUPTION, and this mortal shall have put on*

* John v. 29. Rev. xx. 6. † 1. Cor. xv. 43.

§ ver. 42, 43, 44. † ver. 53, 54.

IMMORTALITY, THEN *shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP VICTORY **,

As some have denied the resurrection of the dead, others again upon pretended philosophical principles, have denied that the *same* body shall be raised : But, if we may believe the apostle, it is *THIS corruptible*, which must put on incorruption ; and *THIS mortal* which must put on immortality. And it favours too much of daring Infidelity, to urge the *imagined* principles of philosophy, against a doctrine which the holy scriptures manifestly design to maintain. *THESE vile bodies*, must be changed, not for *other* bodies, or not in *substance*, but only in CIRCUMSTANCES, so as that *they themselves* shall be fashioned like unto the *glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ †*. Awake then and sing, ye who now dwell in sordid dust, and are covered with gross darkness, for you shall shortly arise and shine, yea, *shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of your Father †*. — But I pass on

IV. To consider *from* whom, and *through* whom this victory is obtained. The text is express ; it is *God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ*.

I. This victory is from GOD. If God were not our deliverer, how would death with his sting, and

* 1. Cor. xv. 53, 54. † Phil. iii. 20, 21.

† Mat. xiii. 43.

the grave with her victory, magnify themselves against us. Our deplorable condition would, doubtless, support and perpetuate their triumph. Our miseries are too deep for the stretch of any created arm, and our bonds too strong, to be dissolved by any power less than infinite. And did not God *freely*, without any desert in us, *give* us the victory, our ruin and our wretchedness had been eternal. We are as destitute of *merit*, as we are of *might*. Not more *incapable* of effecting our own deliverance, than we are *unworthy* of it from the hand of the Lord.

Sin, that by which alone we have destroyed ourselves, and fallen into the hands of death and the grave; SIN, I say, is that which hath provoked the divine Being, and rendered us the objects of his just displeasure and wrathful indignation. — But rejoice not against us, O our enemy. Though we are fallen, we shall arise. For behold, *GOD is our SALVATION: He will give us this victory*. It is founded in his Sovereign will, and springs from his invariable love. *We are more than conquerors THROUGH HIM that loved us* *. It was planned by his unerring wisdom, and shall be executed by his invincible power. Take courage then, O ye trembling Saints, who may startle at death, and shudder at the grave; for this God, who is your God for ever and ever, will not fail you nor forsake you. — He, having forgiven you *ALL trespasses*, freed you from sin's do-

* *Rom. viii. 37.*

minion, given you peace and joy in believing, and begotten you again to a lively hope, will finally deliver you from the *very being* of sin, and all the sorrowful effects of it, and graciously receive you to his kingdom and glory. To assure you of this, he hath given you many exceeding great and precious promises, all confirmed by his solemn oath.—Be not, therefore, *faithless* but *believing*.

2. This victory is given us **THROUGH** *our Lord Jesus Christ*, — The scheme of our redemption was drawn and established *in him, before the world began* §. And that love, to which we shall be eternally indebted for our freedom, is *the love of God* IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD †. According the holy scriptures constantly direct us, in all our hopes of deliverance from sin, and of life everlasting, to this Redeemer of Israel; and assure us that there is not *salvation in any other*; for *there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved* ‡. He engaged in the everlasting covenant, as the Surety of sinners and the Mediator between God and men, to obey the law which we have broken, to bear our guilt and suffer the punishment due to it, and thus to satisfy Divine Justice and obtain eternal redemption for transgressors; and all this he had done, when having said “**IT IS FINISHED,**” he *bowed his head and gave up the ghost*.

God never intended to display the greatness of his

§ Eph. iii. 11. 2. Tim. i. 9. † Rom. viii. 39.

‡ Acts iv. 12.

love

love and the riches of his grace, in the salvation of guilty men, without providing for the claims of his justice, magnifying his law, and fully vindicating the rectitude of his moral government. All this is done in the life and death of the blessed Jesus, who being made sin for us, and bearing our sins, in his own body on the tree, was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; and, by fully expiating all our guilt, or putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself, hath infallibly secured our reconciliation to God, and entire freedom from all the direful effects of our horrid rebellion.

We have nothing to fear from sin, death, or hell, but what is included in the law's dreadful curse; but *Christ hath REDEEMED us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us* *. His atoning blood is our never failing security, and by virtue of this blood, are we sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water. This blood, being sprinkled upon our consciences, gives us peace with God *here*; and by this, we, being sanctified wholly, shall be in the full enjoyment of God for ever *hereafter*. The satisfaction made for sin by the blood of the Son of God, bursts the bonds of death, and opens the gates of the grave to all his faithful people. In consequence of *that satisfaction*, he himself rose from the dead, as the pledge or earnest of their resurrection †. Thus hath he *abolished death*, and is himself become the RESURRECTION and the LIFE; so that he who believeth in him,

* Gal. iii. 13. † Heb. xiii. 20. 1. Cor. xv. 20.

though he were DEAD, yet shall he LIVE *! And thus as SIN hath reigned unto death, so doth GRACE reign through righteousness, unto eternal life BY JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD †.

V. To close with some use of the whole.

Let what hath been said, excite us to serious thoughtfulness of our own dissolution. We cannot but know that we must die: But, if we are not attentive to the important and interesting point, it is certain we do not improve, nor are we properly influenced by such knowledge. Our latter end should, doubtless, have a considerable share, in our frequent, deep, and serious consideration. This is to join wisdom with knowledge; but, to neglect this, is folly greatly to be lamented. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!* This consideration should not be transient, but fixed and abiding. MANY are somewhat impressed; admit new thoughts, and take up new resolutions respecting their great change, whilst they behold a departing friend or relative in the agonies of death, look upon the lifeless clay, or attend the funeral solemnities. In this glass, they, at least, clearly see themselves mortal. But, ah! how quickly do they go away, and entirely forget what manner of persons they are! The hurry of business, the scenes of pleasure, the cares of the world, or the lusts of other things, are soon readmitted to their

* 2 Tim. i. 10. John xi. 25. † Rom. v. 21.

former

former influence. — The thoughts entertained, and the purposes formed in the serious moment, are quite overthrown, and utterly forgotten. But, since death is certain; since it will assuredly soon come, and *may* be sudden; we should live in expectation of it every moment, and, with holy *Job*, be making our *bed in the darkness*, saying to CORRUPTION *thou art my father*; and to the WORM, *thou art my mother and my sister*.

Let not youth, nor health, nor strength, be regarded by you, my friends, as any present defence against this enemy. If you have these circumstances *seemingly* in your favour, be thankful for them, but let them not be unhappily improved, or rather wretchedly abused, to render you sinfully secure in the neglect of God, religion, and your immortal souls; and to embolden you, to put far from you the evil day. You cannot but know, from common observation, though the scriptures had not told you, that many die in their *full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet. Their breasts are full of milk, and their bones are moistened with marrow.* Boast not therefore of to-morrow. Though you are all in the bloom and vigour of life, your eyes may this night be closed with the sleep of death; the last feeble pulse may beat, the last gasp be drawn, and your souls called to the eternal world. — WATCH ye, therefore, *since ye know neither the DAY, nor the HOUR, when death shall seize you.*

2. Let what hath been said enduce us to enquire

E 2

Whether

Whether we are prepared to die. Death meets with some in a very melancholy condition indeed: Devoted to the pleasures of sin, and in heart firmly attached to this present world: Neglectors of the gospel, haters of God, and unaccustomed to prayer and the various exercises of religion and godliness: Destitute of the knowledge of Christ, having no faith in his great salvation; no love to his amiable person, nor any subjection to his righteous and peaceful government: Charged with the guilt of a life spent in infidelity and iniquity, and under the irrevocable curse and condemnation of the divine law.—Thus we read of some, who, after they have run out their days in a profane contempt of the Most High, of his authority and all-sufficiency, and of all dependence upon him and obligation to him, do, in a moment, go down to the grave. Whilst their impious lips, or at least their atheistical hearts, are saying, *What is the Almighty that we should serve him? And what profit should we have if we pray unto him?* They are surprised by death and laid in the grave. How awful the case of such! Surely they are not prepared to die. And are we my friends, delivered from circumstances so unhappy and dangerous? Are we *born from above*, converted and become as little children, without which, we are told by the mouth of infallibility, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven? Have we renounced every sin, and all self-dependence, and fled to the Lord Jesus Christ as our only refuge from the sting of death, and the wrath to come? Are we reconciled to God through the blood of the cross and the subjects of that divine faith which

which purifieth the heart, worketh by love, and overcometh the world? Are our minds formed for communion with God, and to delight in the society, the enjoyments, and employment of the new Jerusalem? If the kingdom of God, which is *righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*, be within us, we are habitually prepared for death, and meet to be partakers of the *inheritance of the saints in light*. The life we now live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us; and, dying in him, he will be our great and everlasting gain. But let none of us neglect seriously and impartially to examine ourselves *Whether we be IN THE FAITH?*

3. Seeing God hath given us the victory over death and the grave, let this defend the hearts of his faithful people against *servile fear* of their last enemy.

You must indeed fall into his hand, and bear his stroke; for, though *Christ be IN you, the BODY is dead because of sin*. Death may even *now* be working in you, and by various and painful disorders consuming your strength, and rapidly drying up the springs of life. You may also be apprehensive of increasing anguish and bitterness, and the scene may be awfully affecting; nor do I mean that you are to despise the enemy and be unconcerned at his approaches. Nature's aversion may be very sensible, and she may be allowed in some measure, to shrink back from the pointed dagger. Nevertheless, the believer's heart, even in the trying moment, should be established, trusting

trusting in the Lord. Notwithstanding all he feels, and all he may perceive coming upon him, he should still reckon, *that the sufferings of this present time, including death with all his grievous and most terrible depredations, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* Let him not forget that his better life is **HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD.** Let him embrace the faithful promise of him who hath said, **I WILL RANSOM THEM FROM THE POWER OF THE GRAVE: I WILL REDEEM THEM FROM DEATH;** and however sensible to the gloomy horrors of the dismal vale, let him be composed, saying, *Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word; and, though I walk through the valley of the SHADOW OF DEATH, I will fear no evil, for THOU art with me.* — For, why should we be afraid, when our flesh and our hearts fail, since God is the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever.

4. Have the saints victory over death and the grave? Then let this consideration relieve and comfort surviving friends and relatives, in reference to those who are dead in the Lord.

Though they are taken from us, they are not lost. Though they are fallen, they are triumphant. They may indeed to an eye of reason, unassisted by divine revelation appear vanquished and ruined for ever; but in the view of faith, founded upon and directed by the everlasting Gospel, they are beheld on the peaceful mount Sion; where, from the most lively, affecting,

ing, and grateful sense of the victory they have obtained, they are singing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. Should we then sorrow as others which have no hope? Our loss in their departure may indeed be great; the loss of a parent, a wife, a husband, a brother, or a friend, but we should be comforted in *THEIR* gain. We should at least, be *resigned*, since they are inconceivably and eternally happy.

'Tis true they are perished from the earth, and from every earthly enjoyment; but they are entered into *peace*, and rest in their *beds*: Death as an enemy hath deprived them of every mortal comfort, and of all the present world affords: Silver and gold, house and land, are no more theirs for ever: But then, on the other hand, they have for ever done with all *necessity* for these things, being arrived at the better country, and having received the riches of the everlasting kingdom.

Though they can no more be cheared and entertained from the enlivening sun, the pleasant spring, the fruitful summer, or the plentiful *harvest*; they regret not the loss, since they are now where their *sun shall no more go down, neither shall their moon withdraw itself: For the Lord shall be their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning shall be eternally ended.*

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; for the LAMB which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their

eyes.

eyes *. Shall we not then *praise* THESE DEAD, which are already dead, more than any of the living which are yet alive? And, far from repining at the providence which hath removed them from this vain world of ours, shall we not rejoice in their happy deliverance and their honourable advancement.

5. Let the consideration of, and hope in this victory, *animate* our joy, *exalt* our gratitude, and *quicken* our obedience. Notwithstanding we must submit to the unwelcome arrest of death, and cannot avoid an imprisonment in the grave, yet the glories and honours of the resurrection morning, should constantly gladden our hearts, and maintain in us a never-failing consolation. Let the triumphs of that day, which will complete the redemption of the *purchased possession*, induce us to glory in present tribulations, and to *rejoice in hope of the glory of God*. Let Israel then rejoice in HIM that made *him* — in HIM that redeemed *him* — in HIM that shall raise him up at the last day.

The voice of joy and gratitude, you hear, sounds in my text. THANKS *be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*. Be thankful to the THREE IN ONE, O ye ransomed of the Lord, for your great salvation. BLESS the God and FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath loved you, and given you good hope through grace; yea so loved you that he spared not his *own*, his *only*

* *Isa. lx. 20. Rev. vii. 16, 17.*

be gotten

begotten Son, but delivered *him* up to the death and curse due to your sins, that you might be made free from sin, and live in his presence, where there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore. — Bless the LORD JESUS, who came into the world, lived and died for you, that you, notwithstanding all the death your sins have justly deserved, might have life through him, and that you might have it more abundantly. Let your constant theme be of Jesus, the faithful witness, and first begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth, and cease not to sing unto HIM *that loved us, and washed us from our sins, IN HIS OWN BLOOD, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to HIM be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Be thankful unto the HOLY GHOST, who hath raised you up from a death in sin, made you his living temples, and taken up his dwelling in you : Who hath *sealed* you to the day of your redemption, and is become the *earnest* of your inheritance. Adore his sovereign grace, which renews you in the spirit of your minds, and his almighty power, which keeps and preserves you now, and by which your bodies shall be raised and beautified hereafter.

And let the joyful, animating prospect of this certain and complete victory, excite your diligence in every duty, and support your patience in every trial and suffering. Stand perfect and complete in all the will of God : Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end : Follow them who

through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises of God. Let not your hands hang down, nor your knees be feeble; but steadily and resolutely maintain your ground, notwithstanding the menaces of your spiritual foes.—In a word, by patient continuing in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, not doubting but you shall shortly enjoy them all, in their fullest and noblest import, in eternal life. This is the use the apostle himself makes of the doctrine before us, and with his words I shall conclude this discourse.

THEREFORE my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

THE END.

A SKETCH of the CHARACTER
Of Mrs. MARY BEATSON,

Who died June 23. 1774. aged 31 years.

IT pleased the great Author of our being, to endue her with good natural faculties; a quick perception, accurate judgment, and retentive memory. In her younger years, her vivacity of temper, spirited conversation, pleasing address, and sweetness of disposition, acquired her the affectionate esteem of many. — Her regard too for religious duties, at least as to the externals of them, was highly commendable; and her attention to them, generally speaking, constant and uniform. Seldom did she omit even *private* duties, except when she had attended a play or a ball, upon her return from which, she has often told me, she never *durst* perform them; these diversions being, in her apprehension, wholly inconsistent with a spirit of devotion.

But, alas! all this time, as she has frequently and deeply lamented, she was, like the Laodicean church, *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*; entirely unacquainted with the gospel method of salvation, and wholly alienated from the LIFE of God. She neither knew her own misery, nor the gospel remedy; and notwithstanding her devotional forms, had a great dislike to the *power* of religion, and a

manifest aversion to all who appeared to be the real professors of it.

In this situation she continued till about the age of twenty three, when it pleased God, who had loved her with an everlasting love, to call her effectually by his grace; *to turn her from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan, whose willing captive she had long been, to the love and service of himself.* — The manner how this truly amazing work was effected, as nearly as I can recollect from the account she has given of it, was as follows.

One evening, as usual, she was reading a NOVEL, I think Sir Charles Grandison, during which time her mind was remarkably and instantaneously struck; and *the eyes of her understanding*, which had hitherto been totally shut, were immediately opened, so that she was capable of spiritual discoveries. In a moment the evil nature of sin as being the *transgression* of God's holy law, and its inconceivably dreadful consequences as exposing the subject of it to the *curse* of that law, were very conspicuously set before her, and awfully fixed upon her awakened conscience.

The impression made upon her mind at this time, was no less sudden than powerful. The operations of the Spirit of God, were entirely sovereign, and with respect to her at least, immediate and abiding. Indeed the convictions she had were too deep to be eradicated, and the discoveries too affecting ever to be forgotten. They even produced great effects upon the

the *body*; for, like the prophet, she *trembled* at the view of the Majesty of God; and conscious of his being infinitely and absolutely holy, and that she was directly the reverse of it, being wholly defiled by sin, she *sunk*, as it were, beneath the weight. This circumstance is not mentioned, as tho' of itself it were any certain evidence of a spiritual conviction, or as tho' it were necessary that others should feel the same; but only as a proof of the immediate and powerful operations of the Spirit with respect to *her*. For, as the apostle observes, *there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God who worketh all in all*. It is not the *manner* therefore, but the *effects* of those operations that we should chiefly attend to, if we would form a true judgment of our spiritual state.

The weakness of body under which she laboured, occasioned by the pungent distress of her mind, continued some weeks; during which time however, it pleased God, who is always near the broken-hearted, to give her at intervals a little relief. The bible, to her an insipid book before, and which she had but rarely attended to, was *now* her constant, and bosom companion. Like Job, she *esteemed the words of God's mouth* more, far more than her *necessary food*. Her supplications and prayers likewise, which were now offered up, were essentially different from what they had formerly been, so that it might now be said of her, as once of Saul, she *PRAYETH*. A feeling sense both of the *real value* of the blessings she implored, and of the unspeakable *wretchedness* she requested

requested deliverance from, were deeply impressed upon her wounded mind ; objects with which before this period, she was absolutely and entirely unacquainted.

No sooner was her bodily strength a little restored, than she hastened to a place where the gospel was preached. Man's fallen, depraved, helpless, and justly-condemned state, was particularly insisted on, and indisputably proved from holy writ ; and every word of the discourse, as far as the preceding doctrine was treated of, she found awfully verified with respect to herself. Such declarations as these — *ALL have sinned — were by NATURE children of wrath — that every mouth may be stopped, — and ALL THE WORLD become GUILTY before God* — were firmly assented to, and deeply felt. Conscious of her being thus guilty, both by *nature* and *practice*, she acquiesced in the *justness* of the Divine sentence, tho' judgment and condemnation were denounced against her. — This is a state of mind, I apprehend, absolutely necessary to be enjoyed, before ever the gospel can be cordially embraced, or the salvation of Jesus heartily approved of.

She was not however long in so affecting a situation. In that same discourse, the gospel plan of salvation was in some measure unfolded, and the only possible way of a sinner's justification before God, by grace, thro' faith, and an account of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, was truly and evidently disclosed. She did not indeed immediately
receive

receive the comfort it affords, when particularly and powerfully applied by the Spirit; but a door of hope was opened by it, and some sensations of divine joy, arising from a view of that glorious salvation, were happily and seasonably excited in her heart.

It may not perhaps be improper to observe here, that almost from the very first convictions of mind she had, she viewed the gospel in that point of light which is commonly called CALVINISTIC; tho' always before that period she had the greatest possible aversion to it. Deeply sensible of her guilty, ruined, and helpless state, she was fully and immovably persuaded, that, if saved at all, her salvation must be wholly and entirely of grace; — that there was nothing to be found in her, or had been performed by her, which could in the least attract the Divine regard, but, on the contrary, every thing that could possibly excite his abhorrence; — and that she was totally unable, by any innate power, to effect her deliverance from so deplorable a state.

She was likewise given to see clearly from scripture declarations, and she never afterwards lost sight of it, that the gospel salvation from its rise to its consummation, is entirely a *sovereign* thing; and that had the Divine Being consigned the whole race of Adam, in consequence of their sin, to the dreary regions of darkness and despair, he had been perfectly just in his procedure, and his righteousness unimpeachable by any of his creatures. By an attention to the scripture, she was also clearly convinced, before

fore ever she heard the doctrine delivered from the pulpit, that *all* who shall be finally saved were **CHOSEN** to that salvation, *before the foundation of the world*; and that the **REASON** of this choice was not any thing in man, or to be done by him, but solely *the GOOD PLEASURE of God's will*.

From this view of things it was, that she could never with any degree of pleasure, hear that preaching, where man was either in whole or in part exalted; or where the everlasting, free, distinguishing love of God was not insisted on, as the grand **SOURCE** of spiritual blessings. Convinced that in her dwelt no good thing, and that our nature is wholly and entirely depraved, she was deeply sensible, that whatever she or others received from God, it must be for a **CAUSE** which had no existence in them.

To return from this digression:—The week following, providentially hearing a sermon read, which had been preached at the Baptist meeting in Bradford, she perceived so much of the gospel of Jesus in it, that she was fully determined to attend there. The first sabbath a neighbouring minister preached; and in the evening had the following passage as the subject of his discourse: *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*

Under this discourse, it pleased God graciously to visit her with the consolations of his spirit,—powerfully

fully to shine upon his own work in her soul; — and so to excite faith, hope, and love there, that she had satisfying views of a change of nature. By this her mind was greatly comforted; she had peace and rest in Jesus, from a view of pardoning mercy through his blood, and tears of joy and gratitude were the natural result of it. She has often said that this evening, like the night when God delivered Israel from the oppressive yoke of Pharaoh, was an evening much to be observed and remembered; and indeed she never forgot it. Seldom did she converse upon it, but a considerable degree of that Divine joy and pleasure she then felt, was evidently discernible.

Being favoured with such gracious manifestations of the Divine goodness, and *believing with the heart unto righteousness*, it was not long before she *CON- FESSED with the mouth unto salvation*. By an attention to the New Testament, the only rule of Christian worship, she was soon clearly convinced, by the express declarations of that invaluable book, that it was the incumbent duty of all, who had cordially received the gospel, to be baptized and added to a church of Christ; and that this would greatly contribute to their spiritual edification and growth in grace. — The example of her Lord and Master was exceedingly forcible in the point of Baptism, and she was uncommonly desirous to follow HIM in that important and salutary institution. — She wished too with the royal psalmist, to *dwell in the house of the Lord for ever, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple*.

After earnest and frequent prayer to God for direction, and that she might be led in the way he would have her to walk in, she opened her mind to the pastor of the church; who, being well persuaded that she was a proper subject for gospel institutions, greatly encouraged her in so laudable and well-directed a pursuit. Accordingly, after having before the assembled church declared her faith in Jesus, and given a reason of the hope that was in her, she was baptized according to the commission, and after the example of our Royal Master; and, as she has often told me and others, it was a season peculiarly refreshing, and in which, like many others in similar circumstances, she was remarkably indulged with the presence of her Lord.

Her entrance into the CHURCH was a solemn season. Many distressing fears attended her, lest after all, she should prove a disgrace to her holy profession. But the great and good Shepherd, who carries the lambs in his bosom, condescendingly favoured her with a comfortable, soul-satisfying opportunity at his own table; so that her anxious fears in a great measure subsided, and from a view of the great compassion and faithfulness of Jesus, she was enabled steadily to believe, that he would fully perfect that which concerned her.

From the time of her entering into a church relation, to the day of her death, she esteemed it as an invaluable, distinguished privilege; and would often pleasingly admire the free, rich, and discriminating

nating grace of God, which had given her a name and a place there : A place which she considered as vastly superior to any dignities of an earthly kind. — Influenced by these views, she ever spoke well of the house of God ; affectionately recommended the institutions of the gospel to every sincere inquirer ; and scarcely, if ever, saw any properly complying with them, but it gave her a considerable degree of pleasure.

After this period however, she had many doubts relative to her being in a gracious state ; owing, I should imagine, partly to her being unacquainted with the nature of the Christian warfare, and partly from a want of attention to the proper evidences of a renewed mind. But it pleased God about this time, to direct her to a book, written by the late judicious minister of the gospel Mr. Brine, in which the difference between *real* conversion and the *semblance* of it is particularly shown ; the reading of which thro' a divine blessing, was made exceedingly useful, instructive, and consolatory to her mind.

By the reading of this book she saw clearly, that whoever had a real love to God and divine objects from a perception of their loveliness and excellency ; — a regard to the brethren, or those that believe in Jesus, because they bear his image ; — and a respect to the commands of God because of the authority he hath enstamped upon them ; — had passed from death unto life. And it pleased the Divine Spirit, whose work and office it is to bear witness to

the saints that they are the children of God, graciously to witness to her mind; by discovering that the things abovementioned are the certain characteristics of the children of God, — that they certainly, in some measure, had an existence in her, — and, consequently, that she was adopted into the family of heaven. She had indeed afterwards many fears with respect to the safety of her state, but never to that degree she experienced them before.

From the time of her conversion, till she happily finished her Christian course, her regard for the BIBLE was uncommonly great. She knew perhaps as well as most, the true meaning of that expression, *man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God*; and the declaration of Jesus was often manifestly verified to her, *my words are SPIRIT, and they are LIFE*. In short, she could not live without it; and whenever health would admit, it was her invariable and uniform practice every day, to read some portion of it at her devotional hours.

The singular advantages resulting from so well-directed a procedure, were both happily experienced by herself, and conspicuously manifest to others. — With respect to herself she found it to be richly profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. It was of particular use — to repel the tempter, — support the mind in trouble, — as a preservative against sin, — for direction in duty, — and further establishment in the truth. — To

others;

others it was manifest, — by the apposite passages she would frequently cite, when familiarly conversing upon divine subjects; and by a frequent reference to many historical parts of scripture, as striking instances, of God's interposition in behalf of his church, when apparently reduced to the greatest distress.

SECRET PRAYER was another duty she greatly delighted in, and constantly performed. Conscious that it was a special mean for maintaining religion in its life and vigour, she was exceedingly conscientious and regular in her attendance to it. Morning and evening, her chamber could witness, she earnestly and affectionately called upon God. Nor did she hurry the duty over in a formal cursory manner, or merely in reference to her own concerns. Her heart was enlarged. I have reason to believe, that few seasons of this nature ever occurred, but she was particularly concerned for the welfare of Zion in general, and especially for that part of the purchased flock with which she was more immediately and closely connected. Nor was she less concerned for those, to whom she was related by the ties of nature. The particular circumstances of these were often affectionately attended to by her, and spiritual blessings ardently implored for them.

Perhaps few were more sensible of their own weakness, or of their daily need of supplies from Jesus, to resist evil and perform duty, than she.

Those

Those two lines of the piously amiable Dr. Watts, were frequently and feelingly repeated by her:

*I can do all things, or can bear
All sufferings, if my LORD be there.*

Deeply conscious of her continual need of Christ, and that *without him* she could *do nothing*, she lived, like the great apostle, *by the faith of the Son of God*; and, in a measure at least, was *strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*.

The importance of a close attention to Christian duties, especially those of a social nature, was clearly seen and duly attended to. *Herein she exercised herself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.* Whenever health would admit, the affairs of the family, the proper sphere of the sex, were superintended with diligence, and becoming concern. She has often observed, that her mind was seldom more peaceable, or in a happier situation, than while attending to her domestic affairs; and frequently mentioned the apostolic precept, as worthy to be regarded by every believer, **DILIGENT IN BUSINESS, — serving the Lord.**

She was not indeed, like too many, so careful and troubled about the *many things*, as to forget, or neglect the *one thing* needful. *This* she considered as the principal object, and *those* as subordinate to it; and therefore, actuated by such a motive, when worldly affairs interfered with the appointed duties of religion,

religion, such duties I mean as have a more immediate respect to God, the former generally, if not always, gave place to the latter. But in order the better to effect this, she endeavoured as much as possible, so to order and dispose her civil concerns, as that without much disadvantage, she might wait upon God either in public, or private; and diligence is the way to attain this.

Her last sickness like many others she had been exercised with in the course of a few years, was long, tedious, and painful. She seemed to have some forebodings of it; and on that account was induced to be more than ordinarily earnest with God, that she might be suitably prepared for his will respecting her. — In the beginning of it, for about a month, her mind was generally serene and happy. The promises of God, those breasts of consolation, were exceedingly sweet and refreshing to her; she daily lived upon them and happily found them *YEA and AMEN in Christ Jesus.*

After about a month had elapsed, it pleased God in some measure to abate her complaints, so that she once ventured abroad; and we fondly hoped that health would have been again completely restored. But the ways of God, in relation to his providential dispensations, are to us incomprehensible, and frequently different from what we would have them. That very night she was again seized, and a violent fever almost immediately came on. — No sooner

did she perceive this, than she was in some perplexity of mind; not indeed on account of death, for that she had rendered familiar to her; but, as she said, from a consciousness that in the little interval from her affliction, she had not retained nor expressed that lively sense of the divine favours she ought to have done. It pleased God however, in a little while to remove this, and afterwards, till the time of her death, she enjoyed an almost uninterrupted composure of mind. The eternal God was her refuge, and underneath were the everlasting arms. Most of those graces which constitute the Christian character, and which are its greatest glory and ornament, were at this season, eminently and pleasingly conspicuous; and, like some luminous constellation, diffused a lustre all around her.

Her FAITH in Jesus, and the precious promises of his word, was remarkably steady and active. Like Abraham, she was *strong* in it, giving glory to God. She found it now, more than ever, to be *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*. Often did she say, “Jesus has long been precious
 “to me, but never so peculiarly precious as now.
 “Alas, what should I do, what must become of me,
 “if I were not interested in the dear Redeemer?
 “I am a weak, helpless, and sinful creature, guilty
 “before God, but I depend solely upon Him as the
 “Lord my righteousness and strength, and I know
 “he will not suffer me to be confounded. *I know*
 “*in whom I have believed*; I know his power, faith-
 “fulness, and love; they have been manifested to-

— wards

“wards me in numberless instances, and I believe
“he will be with me even to the end.”

Her HOPE respecting spiritual objects, and of her own particular interest in them, was strong and lively. It was an anchor to her soul both sure and steadfast, and entered into that within the veil. She happily and uninterruptedly enjoyed, throughout the greatest part of her last illness, what the apostle calls *the FULL ASSURANCE of hope*; or a full persuasion of mind, arising from Scripture evidence, that she was an heir of God through Christ. This appeared in the general tenour of her conversation, and remarkably so in particular instances. — A few of which I will here subjoin.

Reading one day part of the book of Job to her, when we came to that noble, magnanimous passage, *“I know that my Redeemer liveth,”* &c. she immediately burst out into the following animated, encouraging expressions. — “Yes, blessed be God, I do know that my Redeemer liveth, I know he liveth, and because he lives I shall live also. And though after my skin worms destroy this poor, weak, dying body, (putting her emaciated hand out of the bed, and fixing her eye upon it) though they do destroy this body, yet I shall see my God, my Jesus, see him in my FLESH too, in a glorious body; a body, not like this poor, consumed, afflicted one that I now have, but changed like his own most glorious body.” And with a look of triumph added,

H

“Corruption,

“Corruption, earth and worms”

“Shall but refine this flesh,”

“Till my triumphant spirit comes

“To put it on afresh.”

A few days after this, a minister called to see her, and upon his asking her How she did, she replied, “I am in a very weak situation, sir, you see, just on the verge of eternity; but very comfortable in my mind, my God is gracious to me, very gracious indeed;” and repeated the expression several times. After some further conversation she added, “The consideration of the love of God, to so unworthy an object of it, has been an unspeakable comfort to me. That passage, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*, &c. has been exceedingly refreshing to my mind. The consideration that therefore with loving kindness he has drawn me, THEREFORE because he loved me, oh how inexpressibly precious! Then with a vehemency of expression, which one would scarcely have imagined her enfeebled state could have admitted of, she added, “Never fear, sir, to preach the love of God, the everlasting, distinguishing love of God, it is the only source of all our blessings, and gives unspeakable consolation to a spiritual mind. — Not that I would in the least depreciate HOLINESS; no, my God knows I intensely love it, and consider it as the ONLY evidence of my filial relation to him, and what ALONE constitutes a meetness for glory.” So that her hope was lively and full of immor-

“Corruption”

H

talities;

talities; and far from making ashamed, it gave her a sweet anticipation of the heavenly glory.

Nor was her LOVE to God and divine things in general, less conspicuous than either faith or hope. The flame of heavenly affection brightened considerably, notwithstanding the gradual decay of nature. Often did she express the feelings that she had, in the most animated and striking terms; and even when the intellectual powers were nearly disabled for their important offices, and the organs of speech had almost ceased from acting, if she was asked Whether she loved God, and Jesus Christ? She would immediately, and without the least hesitation reply, "Yes;" and sometimes she added, "with my whole heart."

Heavenly JOY was likewise experienced by her in a considerable degree. But a few days before her death, sensible her continuance here would be very short, she was desirous to put her house a little in order; and after giving some necessary directions relative to that, she particularly recounted to a Christian friend who was then with her, the distinguished favours that God had shewn her, especially in calling her with a holy calling, and giving her peace and rest in Jesus. The mentioning of these under the influence of the blessed Spirit, so filled her mind with divine joy and comfort, that she desired they might unite in expressing it by singing a hymn of praise to the God and Father of all her mercies; in which exercise the divine presence was gloriously manifest.

—Nature seemed to be carried beyond itself, or what one would have imagined it was capable of bearing. The voice was amazingly exerted, and every power of the soul, making as it were its last effort, seemed delightfully and spiritually engaged. In the intervals she had ardent breathings to be with Jesus, whom having not seen she loved, and in whom, though as yet she saw him not, yet believing, she rejoiced with joy UNSPEAKABLE and FULL OF GLORY.

PATIENCE too had its perfect work, through the whole of her last affliction. Though it was uncommonly long, tedious, and painful; though several circumstances combined to cause great disquietude, yet her mind, generally speaking, was sweetly and divinely composed. Like the pious psalmist, she was *dumb and opened not her mouth*, in any fruitless God-dishonouring complaints, being deeply conscious that HE had done it, and that therefore it would terminate in her spiritual advantage. — When severely exercised with pain or sickness, she would often say, “I am very fearful lest I should manifest impatience under so long a confinement, or think that my God deals hardly with me.” And frequently in the latter part of her affliction, when she was greatly emaciated, and when, to use Job’s language, her *bones that were once not seen stuck out*, so that even lying in bed was exceedingly painful to her, upon the approach of the morning light, she would often urge such petitions as these; “May my God give me patience this day! May I be kept from fretfully murmuring against him, or
“ from

“from thinking his coming long!” And it pleased Him, who graciously hears and answers prayer, fully to accomplish her pious desires; for she was gloriously enabled, according to our Lord’s direction, **PATIENCE TO POSSESS** her soul.

Indeed, every Christian grace was visibly exercised in the course of her affliction. The fruits of the Spirit, as it has been observed, were evident to all who were conversant with her; and, like the light of the morning, their heavenly lustre seemed gradually to increase, till they shone out in eternal day.

Death, the last enemy, she saw slowly but certainly advancing upon her; and, like a watchful centinel, observed him with an attentive eye. She deliberately viewed him, even in his nearest approaches, with the greatest possible composure of mind. Notwithstanding his cruelty, power, policy, and formidable appearance, she was not in the least dismayed; but on the contrary, discovered an undaunted courage. Conscious of the superior power of the Captain of her salvation, and that this power was certainly engaged in her behalf, she, like David when about to encounter the gigantic Philistine, daringly and repeatedly insulted the menacing tyrant, and bid him do his worst. She smiled at his frequently repeated attacks, and in the most undismayed and spirited manner cried, *O DEATH where is thy STING? O GRAVE where is thy VICTORY?*

Indeed, she viewed Death, in his nearest approaches,

proaches, as being entirely stingless; and the Grave notwithstanding her insatiable cruelty, as wholly devoid of terror; and was fully persuaded that, through her dear Redeemer, though seized by the one, and detained, disgraced, and consumed by the other, yet in the issue she should prove gloriously and happily superior to them both.

Thus she obtained a noble conquest; a conquest, with respect to its nature, far greater and more illustrious than any obtained by Alexander or Cæsar. A conquest over enemies which made them tremble, and entirely stript them of their most celebrated trophies. In consequence of this she triumphed gloriously; she was as the apostle expresses it, *more than a conqueror through him that loved her*: By the blood of the Lamb, and the word of his testimony, weapons which the before-mentioned warriors were wholly unacquainted with, she not only gained an honourable conquest over her last and most formidable foes; but, became a glorious gainer by the cruel war.

Such as hath now been described was her uniform language and behaviour, till the springs of nature were quite exhausted; till the clammy sweats covered the distorted countenance; and the faintly beating heart indicated that it would soon cease to perform its vital functions; in short, till the eyes were clouded by gloomy darkness, and the organs of speech were incapable of action. Then, having done and suffered what her God and Father saw necessary for her

her

her, the heart-strings broke; and the divinely purified soul, being entirely freed from every earthly incumbrance, winged its flight into the arms of Jesus, and was instantly crowned with unfading glory.

Imperfections and infirmities indeed, are absolutely inseparable from human nature in its present earthy corruptible state; and few, I believe, were more feelingly sensible of them than she. The workings of sin in the heart were clearly and distinctly perceived by her, and she frequently used the apostle's language, *With the mind I serve the law of God; but with the FLESH the law of sin.* Particularly she often complained of the natural warmth of her temper, and too great a proneness to hasty expressions, which perhaps was her besetting sin; but whenever it gained the ascendant over her, no one more ready ingenuously to acknowledge them, and I am inclined to think, few more affectionately and truly grieved over them.

On the whole however, from the time of her spiritual birth, to the day of her death, a period of about eight years, she uniformly maintained an honourable character as a disciple of Christ, and singularly adorned the glorious gospel of God her Saviour. With unabating zeal she walked in the steps of her much-loved Lord, and experimentally found the truth of that declaration, *The work of righteousness shall be PEACE, and the effect, the genuine, native, inseparable effect of righteousness, QUIETNESS and ASSURANCE FOR EVER.*

The

The real design of the above Sketch being drawn, is not to transmit an encomium of the deceased to posterity, as a designed panegyric upon her; but, by a faithful though short representation of what was amiable and praise worthy, to excite the emulation of those into whose hands it may providentially fall, to copy after so amiable a pattern. It may be considered likewise, as exhibiting a singular instance of the power, freeness, and salutary tendency of Divine grace in the heart; and that God is not confined to any particular mode of working in the effectual conversion of a sinner to himself. In a word, it will tend to corroborate the assertion of the psalmist, *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace*: And is a striking proof of what the apostle Peter says, *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure — for so an entrance shall be ministered to you ABUNDANTLY, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

And now, reader, permit me to ask, What are thy thoughts relative to the above-mentioned conquest? Is it not a noble one? Do not the victories and triumphs of the Alexanders and Cæsars, appear absolutely inglorious when compared with this? And does not religion, as briefly described in the above portrait, evidently appear an important reality? Be assured it is; and unless thou art made a real and happy partaker of it, thou wilt fall as a prey into the hands of DEATH. He will assuredly, ere long, if thou continuest under the tyrannical dominion of sin, approach thee armed with his deadly sting, and

bell,

hell, his inseparable companion in all his advances to the unconverted, will dreadfully *follow with him*. Be concerned then, above all things to obtain the remission of thy sins, and earnestly pray that thou mayest partake of that REPENTANCE towards God and FAITH in the Lord Jesus Christ, without which the blessing of pardon can never be enjoyed.

But if thou art already so singularly favoured, as to know from scripture evidence, that thou art passed from death unto life, and hast obtained *redemption in Christ's blood, even the forgiveness of thy sins*; then, REJOICE in hope of the glory of God, and bid defiance to all thy foes. Though they be malicious, strong, and subtle; though their aspect be dreadfully formidable; and though many have been overcome by them; be not discouraged. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; put on the whole armour of God, and doubt not but by those repeatedly tried weapons, thou shalt at last be MORE than conqueror; and, like the glorious Captain of salvation himself, having by his strength overcome, shalt ere long be eternally seated on a throne of the most inconceivable glory, and see all thine enemies destroyed for ever. Even DEATH himself shall be swallowed up in victory, he shall be cast into the lake of fire, and God shall wipe away all tears for ever from thy eyes.

THE END.

OF MR. MARY BEATSON.

Lately Published,

DIALOGUES

ON THE

DIVINE CHARACTER,

AND

SATISFACTION of CHRIST

In two Parts,

By JOHN BEATSON.

Price sewed 3 s. 6 d.

Either of the Volumes may

be had separate.